

Thoughts on a future State,

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF

Mrs. *HESTER ANNE ROGERS*;

BY A YOUNG LADY,

Who met in her Class.

ALSO,

An Elegy on the same Occasion,

BY ANOTHER LADY,

Who enjoyed the same Privilege of her maternal Instructions in
the Way to Glory.

The Memory of the Just is blessed.

“ With mixt Concern her Flight we view,
With Joy the ascending Pomp pursue,
Yet for OUR Loss distressed:—
Our Bosom-friend from Earth is flown,
A Mother of our Israel gone
To her eternal Rest!”

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[REPRODUCED FROM]

Thoughts on a future State ;

Occasioned by the Death of Mrs. ROGERS.

AIR-built and baseless all, are earth's delights,
And grief intrudes into their noblest heights ;
To changes subject, and to ills a prey,
They bud and wither in a winter's day ;
And like th' unfriendly plant of sense, too quick,
Bloom at a distance, but when touch'd grow sick :
What calls on man to look beyond this sphere,
Since he's immortal, and all's mortal here ?
If endless life, and lasting summers wait
To crown us when we leave this wint'ry state,
How should each change instruct us to be wise,
And tell us, we are natives of the skies !

But, sure of bliss (if ought deserves the name)
Fair Friendship's pleasures must the title claim ;
Her joys are mighty, but they often fail,
For, while in mortal robes, ev'n *she* is frail.
Ah ! yes, CELESTIA ! Friendship's tears must flow,
While mem'ry lasts, or we thy absence know :
Full oft we trace the happy moments fled,
When we to noblest joys by thee were led ;
And whilst we talk'd of heav'n, and learn'd the way,
Mercy divine let in a beam of day,
Till faith and hope exulting soar'd on high,
And each affection center'd in the sky ;
We long'd to clap th' immortal wing, and praise
In louder songs the source of boundless grace,
Where no dull sense, or intermediate cloud,
Can ever the Redeemer's presence shroud,

But love unbounded, and extatic joy
 Burst forth in endless songs without annoy.

But scenes elaps'd I'll leave, while I presume,
 With daring thought, to penetrate the gloom
 That hides immortal things from mortal view,
 And humbly thy enraptur'd flight pursue
 To worlds of bliss, complete fruition's height,
 Perfect existence, and immediate sight.

Oh, had we seen thee when the vail undrew,
 And thy free'd spirit from its prison flew!
 What floods of glory burst upon thy sight,
 What sounds melodious rung the ether bright,
 As heav'nly spirits led thee through the sky,
 Midst blazing suns, and rolling worlds on high;
 While joyful friends throng'd thick the heav'nly way,
 And hail'd thee to the bright abodes of day;
 Then joining in their songs of triumph high,
 The loud hosannas echo'd thro' the sky.

And now what mighty joys thy pow'rs surprise,
 Stretch'd out from mortal to immortal size;
 Surrounded, fill'd, absorb'd in Godhead's sea,
 And wrapt in visions of the Deity.
 Yet not o'erwhelm'd, bewilder'd, or confus'd,
 Thy nature so with the divine infus'd,
 So fitted to thy state, so pure and high,
 That heav'n's profounds suit thy capacity.

Thy glow-worm knowledge here by faith begun,
 In open vision bursts into a sun;
 Thro' organs weak no longer dribbled in,
 Nor labours purblind Reason scraps to win:
 But senses large, congenial with the skies,
 'Wake to new life, and into action rise:

By

By intuition now, all ear, all sight,
 Perception all, and piercing as the light,
 Thou need'st no medium to convey delight. }
 With open face thou view'st the Eternal Three
 In union join'd, a glorious Trinity!
 And at the view increasing raptures flow,
 While proving, " 'tis eternal life to know *."
 Thou view'st unveil'd the attributes divine,
 Which in unrivall'd beauty round thee shine,
 Adoring the transcendant harmony,
 Which joins them all in man's redemption free.

Alike by thee his government's survey'd,
 Where'er his all-creative pow'r's display'd,
 Allow'd his circling providence to trace
 From heav'n's first order to the reptile race:
 Here wonders new create sublime delight,
 And holy praise breaks forth at ev'ry sight.

Nor less his grace thy searching mind employs,
 Since " Angels o'er a penitent rejoice † ;"
 Here thou discover'st mercies richest store,
 And endless cause to wonder and adore.
 Now thou well know'st the secret works of grace,
 Which first attracted thee to seek his face,
 From hence pursuing all the steps divine,
 Which thro' thy life in ceaseless mercies shine;
 The end discov'ring of each grief and pain,
 Why they were sent, and what thy endless gain:
 Alike survey'd is ev'ry hidden snare,
 Escap'd by thee thro' providential care;
 A thousand blessings now to thee are known,
 O'er which on earth a pierceless vail was thrown.

* John xvii. 3.

† Luke xv. 10.

What funds of pleasure must such views supply,
And themes for praise throughout eternity !

Creation's works are open to thy sight,
From lifeless matter to the seraph bright :
What wonders in the world of spirits shine,
Expressive of their origin divine !
Here beings high, and things inanimate,
Which still retain their pure primeval state,
Are understood by thee, whose piercing eye
Can into beings' inmost essence pry :
And if revisiting this nether sphere
How differently each object must appear !
No longer can the surface bound thy sight,
But nature's secret springs are brought to light,
And God appears diffus'd throughout the whole,
The source of life—creation's living soul.

Is such thy knowledge of thy glorious Lord ?
Then sure thy love in measure must accord ;
Possessing now the end thy soul pursu'd,
In near fruition of its perfect good :
No more (as here) frail nature sinks oppress'd,
When with peculiar revelation blest ;
Then words were lost in love's immense abyss,
And silence best express'd th' unutter'd bliss.
(What proof that love is heav'n's commencement here,
Since mortal language sinks beneath its sphere,
Praise aims in vain to set its glories forth,
And only songs celestial gave it birth) :
But now at large, uncircumscrib'd and free,
Thy vast affections feed on Deity :
Extatic love in holy rapture flows,
Increasing ever as thy knowledge grows ;

In full enjoyment and immediate sight,
 Of him whose beauties are thy sole delight,
 Thy praise unwearied, must forever flow,
 And pleasures no embarrassment can know ;
 Renew'd by having his continual smile,
 No doubt intruding thy delights to spoil,
 But large returns for ever flow to thee,
 Of mutual love and sweet complacency.

And Joy (Love's first-born offspring) lives to prove
 And celebrate the jubilee above ;
 Immediate draughts receiving from the throne,
 While thy lov'd Saviour makes his joy thy own ;
 Thou shar'st in all his glorious victories,
 Exulting o'er its vanquish'd enemies,
 Ascribing endless glories to his name,
 And ever crying " Worthy is the Lamb
 " Who wash'd our robes and conquer'd all our foes,
 " And now on us eternal life bestows :"
 And fresh discov'ries of unfathom'd love
 Will thro' eternity thy joys improve.

Are such the glories of thy perfect state ?
 Then thy employments must alike be great ;
 (For spirit is to action ever bent
 And torpid rest is not its element.)
 Art thou engag'd in acts to us unknown
 Of solemn worship 'fore th' eternal throne,
 Which all thy mighty faculties employ,
 And give full scope to wonder, love, and joy ?
 Or sent to this terrene on errands kind,
 Perhaps to sooth thy Partner's fainting mind,
 When deep-felt grief's impetuous tempests blow,
 Or secret tears from silent anguish flow ;

Then

Then to administer the cordial sweet,
 And lead his views to yon' celestial seat,
 Where kindred souls in sweet enjoyment meet? }
 Or dost thou come a guardian angel bright
 O'er the dear objects of thy late delight,
 Averting danger and instilling truth
 In soft instructions to their tender youth?
 Or dost thou visit those with kind solace
 Who were thy pupils in the school of grace?
 Oh, have I ever felt thy friendly pow'r
 Conducting me thro' dark temptation's hour,
 And taken, when unconscious of thy aid,
 The cup of comfort by thy hand convey'd?
 Reviving thought! it wipes the tear of woe,
 Since friendship lives more perfect than below.
 Nor less 'tis likely that thy guardian hand
 Supports thy friends along the shadow'y land,
 When life is hov'ring on the short'ning breath,
 And its warm current gently cools in death;
 Then bearing the triumphant soul away,
 Thou aid'st its anthems in the courts of day,
 And mixing with the brilliant hosts above
 Recount'st the wonders of redeeming love;
 While list'ning angels hear with sweet surprise,
 And gusts of hallelujahs ring the skies.
 Now fellowship is perfect and complete,
 Where thought communes with thought and notions
 meet,
 And swift as light'ning distant souls can reach,
 With clear expression far surpassing speech;
 Thus fitted for sublime society,
 With beings of consummate purity,

Thou

Thou hold'st high converse with angelic choirs,
 Cherub, and seraph, and with human fires,
 With all the glorious hosts around the throne,
 Perhaps with beings yet to us unknown,
 Gather'd from num'rous worlds remote from ours,
 And form'd with various faculties and pow'rs;
 While each the victories of grace declare,
 And countless acts of providential care:
 Then joining in melodious strains of praise,
 To mercies center, and the source of grace,
 Each happy soul takes in large draughts of joy,
 And unconceiv'd delights thy pow'rs employ.

Say does some spirit (perhaps thy infant son*,
 For sure by thee he's still belov'd and known)
 Direct thy flight along th' etherial way
 Where suns unnumber'd burn, and comets stray
 To some new workmanship of pow'r divine,
 Where beings in Adamic glory shine,
 And uncurs'd nature all harmonious glows,
 And shining fair its Maker's glory shows.
 Here wonders rise on wonders to thy view,
 In objects fair, immaculate and new;
 And seem with thee in concert sweet to join,
 In one delightful hymn of praise divine.

Are such as these thy blest employs on high?
 While God is all in all and ever nigh;
 For wide extended space is full of him,
 Nor ought thy ever-waking sight can dim;
 Hence, tho' engag'd at natures utmost bound,
 Thy heav'n,—Thy God must still thy soul surround.

* Who died in the year 1789, at the age of six weeks.

But cease my vent'rous thought, too apt to fly
 To things for thy capacity too high ;
 Since ear hath never heard, nor eye beheld,
 Th' immortal glories of the upper world,
 And all is bold chimera at the best,
 In darkness form'd, and wrapt in errors, rest ;
 Nor thought can paint, nor language give them birth,
 And faint descriptions but degrade their worth ;
 Hence I'm constrain'd the subject to dismish,
 Till made with her a fellow heir of bliss.

May 15, 1795.

AN ELEGY,

On the Death of Mrs. HESTER ANN ROGERS.

SAY, shall the muse, in plaintive weeping strains,
 A dear departed pious friend lament ?
 Or join the host on yonder glorious plains,
 To greet, with triumph, the victorious saint ?

A conqu'ring warrior, who, return'd from fight,
 Has gloriously her ev'ry foe subdu'd,
 And now reposes in the plains of light,
 And triumphs in the presence of her God.

Can we, who sojourn in the vale of life,
 (Who still each anxious, painful trial, know)
 Desire to lengthen out the mortal strife,
 Of one so fully meet from earth to go ?

Can we the breathings of her spirit trace,
 Behold the ardour of her panting soul ;
 Her steadfast care to run th' appointed race,
 Her longing to attain th' heav'nly goal ?

Her

Her deep communion with the God of love,
 To feel whose presence was her sole delight;
 Her life of faith, conceal'd with Christ above,
 Now chang'd into the beatific fight.

Say, can we view, and wish to stop her flight,
 E'en for a moment to the world recal?
 Oh that her glory on our souls may light!
 On us some portion of her spirit fall!

No, surely, here we'll bid our tears farewell,
 And triumph with the saint to glory gone;
 With her the praise of our Redeemer tell—
 Above, below, the triumph is but one.

Ah, no! 'tis not the dead demands our tears,
 But for ourselves, alas! our sorrows flow;
 We joy in her escape from griefs and fears,
 To where the trees of life and pleasure grow.

But by a double tie she claim'd our love,
 And lo, at once, we mourn a Friend and Guide!
 Oft' has she led our souls to things above,
 And sweetly pointed to the Crucified.

Deeply experienc'd, Satan's wiles she knew,
 And bid us of his dang'rous baits beware;
 Set forth the Saviour's love for ever new,
 Watching our souls with constant tender care.

Full well she knew the goodness of her Lord,
 And wish'd that all, with her, his love might feel;
 For this his mercy she to all declar'd,
 With humble gratitude, and pious zeal.

To youth, or age, her kind advice she gave,
 Alike by youth, or age, belov'd, rever'd;
 To all adapted, all their souls to save,
 Some rous'd by threat'ning, some by comfort
 cheer'd.

Yet

Yet while she labour'd thus, with pious zeal,
 She ne'er despis'd the social calls of life;
 But with a conscientious care fulfill'd
 The duties of a parent, child, and wife.

Thus while on earth her Master's work she wrought,
 And now her Lord has said, "Enough is done;
 "Thy arms lay down—the fight of faith is fought—
 "The prize of everlasting glory's won!"

Thrice happy saint! no more our tears shall flow,
 No more our selfish hearts thy loss shall mourn;
 Be this our aim, like *thee*, our God to know,
 That with like joy we may to heav'n return.

And thou, dear partner of her joys and cares,
 What consolation can a friend impart,
 (A child of your united faith and prayers)
 To ease the sorrows of a wounded heart?

Short is the time of man's appointed space,
 Soon will this transitory life be gone;
 Then shall your soul its dearer part embrace,
 And stand with her before yon' glorious throne!

E'en now, by faith, your soul with hers shall join,
 And learn the strains of the seraphic throng;
 Till all renew'd in purity divine,
 You sing in heaven the never-ceasing song!

AGNES BULMER.



